

NEWS RELEASE

**INDIANA
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



For Immediate Release: March 4, 2004
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Joseph E. Kernan, Governor
Alan D. Degner, Commissioner

Kernan Awards Workforce Development Grant for South Central Indiana

Indianapolis, Ind. – Gov. Joe Kernan today awarded the South Central Workforce Investment Board a \$254,880 grant to improve the area's economic and workforce development capacity.

Awarded through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the South Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB) represents Bartholomew, Brown, Jackson, Jennings, Monroe and Owen counties. It will use the grant to offer computer-based learning programs, upgrade vocational education equipment and operate a database designed to link local workforce and economic development staff. The database will include listings of skills required for area jobs as well as the workforce's skill level.

"As our economy continues to change, one thing doesn't: the need for a quality and well-trained workforce," said Kernan. "To be competitive Indiana must have a world-class workforce, and with project like this – that have benefits for both business and workers – we will be. We applaud the efforts of the South Central WIB."

Energizing Indiana's Workforce grants are one-time grants appropriated from federal funds. The grant is designed to encourage the state's WIBs to create stronger links between economic and workforce development. Specifically, the funds are used to support efforts to upgrade the skills of the Hoosier workforce in the four industry sectors: life sciences, advanced manufacturing, high-tech distribution and information technology.

"These grants not only support the goals of Energize Indiana, they also support the state's workforce development initiative, Indiana@Work. By providing this funding to the WIBS, we can work together to develop programs to support the needs of our workers and employers," added Kernan.

"Workforce professionals located in the local WorkOne offices will be able to better coordinate their activities with local economic development officials. The grant provides funding for needed technology upgrades at Hoosier Hills Career Center and C4 Columbus Area Career Connection. We are pleased to receive this grant," said John Corcoran, South Central Indiana WIB Director.

Indiana@Work is comprehensive workforce development plan, announced by the governor in his State-of-the-State address. The program combines the efforts of DWD and the Indiana Department of Commerce in an effort to match jobseekers with companies that have openings. It also provides training funds to businesses, for potential employees who are facing a "skills gap" that could keep them from attaining higher-pay jobs. And, eventually, Indiana@Work will help workers develop "e-resumes" that they can carry with them throughout their careers.

South Central WIB/ add 1

Through its various programs and initiatives, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state's 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.

For more information on this, or any other DWD program, contact Jeff Harris at 317/232-3396 or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.

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